

Navigating Dystopia: Necropolitical Temporality and Resistance in Mohammed Rabie's Otared

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Abstract

This paper offers a critical analysis of Mohammed Rabie's dystopian novel *Otared*, extending Achille Mbembe's theory of necropolitics through the concept of "necropolitical temporality." Drawing on Mbembe's framework, supplemented by Michel Foucault's insights into biopolitics and governmentality, we argue that the regime in *Otared* exerts sovereign power not only by determining who lives and dies but also by systematically manipulating temporal experience. This manipulation distorts how individuals and communities relate to the past, present, and future, serving as a potent instrument of subjugation that reinforces systemic control and forecloses resistance. Specifically, this study examines three interlocking mechanisms: how the regime distorts historical narratives, constructs a perpetual state of emergency to immobilize the present, and obstructs any vision of a liberated future by pathologizing hope. Through close textual analysis of *Otared*, and a comparative lens with post-2011 Egyptian authoritarianism, the paper identifies fragile yet ethically significant acts of "temporal resistance." These efforts by characters to reclaim individual and collective relationships with time, despite the pervasive chronotope of chronic violence and existential uncertainty, reveal how memory, mourning, and symbolic defiance can challenge the regime's monopolistic control over temporality. Ultimately, *Otared* emerges as a chilling meditation on necropolitics' capacity not only to govern bodies but also to colonize memory, justice, and time itself, while simultaneously providing a theory of resistance from within the "death-world."

Keywords: Necropolitical Temporality, Temporal Resistance, Biopower, Dystopian Fiction, Hope and Futurity